

**Interview with Gerald T. Halpin
conducted by Ginny Peters for the
Providence District History Project Providence Perspective**

November 19, 2010

Linda: Today is November 19th 2010 and we are here at the offices of West Group with Gerald Halpin and Ginny Peters. My name is Linda Byrne and I am from the offices of Supervisor Linda Smyth. We're recording today for the purposes of the Providence District History Project. And Ginny I'll turn this over to you.

Ginny: Okay, well we have to start back at the beginning and the first of the three questions we asked you were first about your childhood and growing up.

Jerry: You want an answer to that?

Ginny: Yeah that would be good.

Jerry: Well I was born and raised in Scranton, Pennsylvania and grew up to be a teenager and then went in the Seabee's in World War II with the Marines out in the Pacific. And came back and went to, got into Syracuse University that fall. I had applied to Harvard and where else, Colgate and Pennsylvania the University of Pennsylvania but there were so many vets coming home from the war that I couldn't get in until the following January so I had just spent four years away from after high school away from getting into college so I decided I'd go with my older brother who was going up to Syracuse to get his Doctorate. So I went up to Syracuse and was there four years and graduated from there. I had gotten into R.O.T.C., forgive me for saying it but I was the second number two student in the class.

Ginny: And why am I not surprised.

Jerry: The number one student was a Japanese boy, I had just come back from the Pacific but he did a fine job but anyway we were both to be awarded money to go to graduate school. I was coming down to Georgetown law school but the whole thing changed when I went off on my honeymoon with my wife. When I

got back the whole R.O.T.C. class, when I went down to get sworn in because the day I was to get sworn in was the day I was getting my graduate certificate from the University, and I was getting married and leaving and heading out of town to get married...

Ginny: And how did you meet Helen?

Jerry: We were in classes together at college.

Ginny: At Syracuse?

Jerry: Yeah and she did some typing of reports for me that I wrote. I went to four or five classes in the morning and worked in the afternoon for a company called Retail Credit; it's now Halifax. I worked full time but then I had two women, ladies who did the typing for me to type up the investigation reports I had done for Retail Credit at that time. I took two old buildings over and turned them over into boarding houses. I had become a carpenter in the Seabees and I knew how to hammer so I—

Ginny: And that was in D.C. in Washington right D.C., the buildings?

Jerry: Oh, no no the buildings were at college for the students.

Ginny: Oh they were at Syracuse.

Jerry: Yeah, you had to pay 30 dollars a month for a room.

Ginny: Okay.

Jerry: So I had 30 students paying me 30 dollars a month so they lived in my houses. That worked out fine. And then I also had the concession for the New York Times. I can't remember but there were either six or eight thousand new students in the freshman class that year, most of them were vets coming home from the war. And they had to take citizenship 101 and read the New York Times. I guess that's what it was called so I had the franchise to deliver that. It was something like 4,000 papers every Sunday and they were 75 cents delivered by my buddy and I they cost a dollar so we did quite well there too.

Ginny: (giggling) So way back in college you were quite an entrepreneur too.

Jerry: We were busy, I had spent three and a half years in service but they run for four years total. The Marines and the Seabees had shipped out going to the Pacific mainly out of Port Wynn if you know where that is – it is north of L.A.

Ginny: In California.

Jerry: I have been working with an outfit to build a new visitors center there, a museum.

Ginny: Right now?

Jerry: The Navy is doing it; a number of Admirals. But anyway I grew up in Scranton.

Ginny: And when you went to graduate school what was your main focus.

Jerry: Well I really went to law school.

Ginny: Oh okay.

Jerry: And then my wife started to work for two scientists and that became Atlantic Research. Dr. Spurlock and Dr. Sloan (Arthur W. Sloan), Dr. Spurlock, Arch his first name was. He was from Texas and M.I.T. and his growing period was starting during the cold war in Alexandria and when my wife started to work for him and I think she was the 37th employee there. And I went with her to Arch's house once – he use to have the group oh every 60, 90 days have a party at their house – have dinner at his house. And I went with her and he was a big poker player and played poker with him and I beat him then he said anyone who beats me in poker has to come work for me. So I did leave Georgetown Law School in my last semester. I knew my law – I knew my contract law and I knew my real estate law and I wasn't interested in any other law so I left the school. And they later sent me what do you call it a graduate certificate?

Ginny: A diploma?

Jerry: A diploma and I didn't think they knew that I hadn't graduated. So I told my secretary to send it back to them which she did. I wish I had kept it. And I'll have to tell them now cause they still call me a graduate or alumni.

Ginny: Isn't that funny.

Jerry: But um I ended up taking over all the non-technical business at Atlantic Research. We grew – you may or may not know we, not me but the scientists there developed solid fuel to get us to the moon and helped us with the cold war. I'm really proud of them too they were really U.S. citizens working to save this country and they spent their full time doing it.

Ginny: And that relationship has continued right?

Jerry: Well they're still my partners or we're all partners. Well we're disbanding the company as we speak, by the end of the year. Their kids and grandkids and great grandkids are our partners in the assets that we had; and the main ones we had are right here at Tysons Corner.

Ginny: Right.

Jerry: And things went well at the law school and I ended up at Atlantic Research and headed the legal department there and then Jim Crowley came and joined me. He was, he had done legal work across the country actually with some big companies but we ended up with eight attorneys in the company. As the company grew we had about 3,900 people.

Ginny: that was Atlantic Research?

Jerry: Atlantic Research and we grew in Alexandria and then at one point I suggested to Dr. Scurlock that I thought it was time to move because we were running out of space in Alexandria. We had eight or nine buildings in the north end of town there and we'd actually fired statically eight inch rockets in the 700 block of North Fairfax.

Ginny: Is that right?

Jerry: I told who was our Congressman Bill Moran or Jim Moran?

Ginny: Jim Moran.

Jerry: Jim Moran – well Jim and I were on top of the Ramada there at the north end of town the Old Colony all those.

Ginny: The old Mark Center?

Jerry: I did all that stuff and we owned it. And we were on the top of the Ramada one day looking out and I said did you realize we fired eight inch rockets right there? Statically meaning they were strapped down. And he said I was kidding him you couldn't have done that in Alexandria.

Ginny: Laughing

Jerry: I said we did it; we had permission. I went to the Council there to properly get the legal permission to do it. And when they said oh what are you going to do there? And I said oh its top secret and the mayor there might tell you but I'm not about to tell you, anyway they approved it.

Linda: What year would that have been – approximately?

Jerry: 1953, 1952 to 1955 someplace in there. And we had buildings right there in the 800 block of North Fairfax Street that they are all developed into small shops and things now.

The Simpson family who are still there in Alexandria; Don Simpson is the son. His father and his uncle did most of the construction on the Alexandria area. Don and I were partners in a couple of projects. The big Sun Trust building there and the one across the street. Don did most of the work on the rehab building, starting all the way down by the River on King Street all the way up to the monument.

Ginny: Yeah. So how did you go from Atlantic Research to West Group?

Jerry: Well Atlantic Research decided to go - we grew and grew and we had plans down at as you know Currituck Sound in North Carolina – a big piece of property there. I bought five miles of ocean frontage for something like a little less than half a million dollars I think. One acre sites were going for over a million two

years ago. But it was five miles of ocean front because it was going to be top secret.

We were going to – Atlantic Research was going to add beryllium to the solid fuel and we thought if it ever exploded it could kill a lot of people around. So I spent a number of years looking for five thousand acres in West Virginia and was unsuccessful. And found a piece in North Carolina, it wasn't 5,000 acres but it had five miles of ocean front that was protected. And more than five miles on Currituck sound and you couldn't draw a straight line it went like this but – and on the north side was some top secret government Navy work and on the south side it was 19 miles down to the closest any inhabitants living there north of Kitty Hawk.

Ginny: Near Duck.

Jerry: It was from Duck up and in fact you are quite right it was right at Duck. In fact the governor at that time agreed that if I would hire meaning Atlantic Research would hire a certain number of people I can't remember what. This is all written up in history book for these kind of things by the way.

Ginny: Oh, okay.

Jerry: And we all had a club – there's a club there that's now an estate – an historic place, but that was ours at that time. But he and I and then he became a U.S. Senator. I forget his name now but we agreed that he would bring a road – pave a road from Duck up if we hired some number of people. And then of course the war then ended a little while later and so that never took place. But we've had 30 or 50 people working there but the family that ran that area – the Whalehead Club the grandfather spoke – this is written up in a book you can get a book on it it's called the Whalehead or the Outer Banks at Currituck or something like that. It's all written up in history now but the family that was there is still living there, the grandfather spoke old English.

Ginny: Really?

Jerry: He ran that Post Office in and as I said this is written up in a book and I won't get into it.

Ginny: So then after North Carolina was when you and Atlantic – when that didn't come to fruition?

Jerry: Well we went public I do remember a story that I tell people one of the biggest mistakes I made in my life - I wasn't a board member but I was head of the legal department at that time – security, everything that was not technical – plus mergers and acquisitions around the country. There was a plant in Southern California down off Newport Beach in the costal plaza there. We had a big missile there almost as big as a freight car that we fired out of Park City, Utah down in the White Sands.

That's another story you should get sometime. We fired that missile with the General standing beside us and we went down in a jeep, RCA was our downrange tracker for this missile. And they wouldn't leave us in the front door of our building and the General had just died a couple of months ago. He was given a sum of about a hundred and twenty million a year for our projects. He was standing beside me and they wouldn't leave us in his building – really. And it turned out that we finally got in and we said what in the world is going on. And they said we fired the missile and we lost it and it's going to hit Durango. And I won't get into all of this – it's a long story but we let it go in one piece and no one got hurt but it was a decision I had to make.

But anyway we were having a Board meeting right there on where they knocked a big building down in the 900 block of Columbus Street there.

Ginny: Columbus Street.

Jerry: It was an old gray building and now it's all in condos right where the power line comes off.

Ginny: Right, right.

Jerry: That's where our offices were. I was setting the conference room table up for the meeting and the board meeting and Jimmy Johnson, you remember

Lemon, Johnson it was the only big broker in Washington. And he showed up, he was on the board and he came in and he helped me get the table set up for the board. And I never forgot it for some reason we were sitting on the edge of the conference tables just talking and waiting for the other board members and he said to me, once again I wasn't on the board I was the treasurer.

Ginny: Were you.

Jerry: Secretary and vice president but I said what's new with you Jimmy and he said well I'd like to make a deal with you he said you've got a lot of Atlantic Research stock coming and he said you have more than I have than Jimmy had. And he said well I'm just taking an older couple through a their company they run a hamburger stand hot dog and hamburger stands in Washington and I'm taking them public and I have a large part of their stock and I'd like to get rid of some of that and take some from Atlantic Research. And take some of yours from Atlantic Research. I says just what is the business and he says just hot dogs and hamburgers; and I said no I wouldn't, I don't want to get into that business. So I turned down about 25% of the stock for a company today called Marriott.

Ginny: Marriott yes.

Linda: Oh my goodness.

Jerry: True story I could have traded it for half of Helen's and my stock I'm guessing I can't remember but for Atlantic Research. And he said well I'd rather have more of your stock, Atlantic Research stock, I have a very large part of this couples company stock that had taken...

Ginny: I remember when that happened.

Jerry: Do you?

Ginny: I do because we contemplated buying that stock.

Jerry: Is that right.

Ginny: Yep. It was like 26 dollars a share.

Jerry: Something like that but I was – it wouldn't have been about twenty five percent of the company as I – he had more like forty or fifty percent I think.

Ginny: So we're still trying to get to West Group Jerry.

Jerry: West Group formed – well ah, because of going public a lot of us made more money than we ever thought we would on Atlantic Research. So, of course the cold war ended and things were changing some and I had hired two people at Harvard Business School for Atlantic Research; one Tom Nicholson in 1956 and Chuck Ewing in 1961. Tom was associated with the U.S. Navy and Chuck had gone to West Point. They are still on the board here (West Group) but they're retired. We decided that we'd leave Atlantic Research and they didn't have as much stock as my wife and I had because we were there five and ten years before them. We decided to leave and Tom left first and I stayed as a consultant at Atlantic Research until about 1963 I believe – 1962 or 1963. Tom left and we were going to build a new building in a new area called Springfield; he started and we then got an office we set up which was the south side of Duke Street- which is now in the middle of Duke Street – there's a brick building there we owned and Homer Hurst talked us into getting into what's now Landmark Shopping Center. It was a gravel pit and we had that office building right across the street. I remember I was driving up the little hill going into the parking in front of that building when the President was shot, J.F.K. I had my radio on in my car and it just got announced.

But Tom Nicholson started the company to get the shopping center going. Then Ed Lynch brought us a farm here called the Magarity family had the farm – not the one we are sitting on but across the street.

Ginny: Where Magarity Road is.

Jerry: Right up here on the hill. But ah he had offered it to me the year before we bought it but I asked him how - it was something like, oh I forget, it was 150 acres or something like that. The Ulfelder family had the mansion across the street Maplewood it was called.

Ginny: John's family?

Jerry: John Ulfelder's family – his grandmother and grandpa. But his grandmother had moved to Mexico. They were Doctor and nurse and they set up medical in a good part of Mexico City at that time.

But anyway I asked Ed how much they wanted for the farm and he said twenty five hundred an acre and I said that's too much money. So we turned it down and then I bought it a year later. I was going I'll never forget I was leaving the front door of Atlantic Research; it was the new building we had built at Edsel Road. Because we chose that to move out of Alexandria because there was a new airport going to be built at Burke as you know.

Ginny: Yes, we talked about that yeah.

Jerry: And if you came out of Burke you came down Braddock road and picked up Edsel road on out to Shirley Highway which was the only four lane highway in Northern Virginia, and was south of the pentagon about – I don't know – about six to eight miles or seven miles, something like that. And that was the main highway at all in Northern Virginia; the only four lane highway that I remember in Northern Virginia. But anyway, I was coming out the front door heading out west to California – we were building there south of L.A. and Ed Lynch came up to me, drove up to the new building we had built there that building won a lot of awards and it cost twelve dollars and fifty cents a square foot including the carpet.

Ginny: Oh my gosh.

Jerry: Including carpet. You've seen it – it had a parabolic roof on it.

Ginny: Oh, right, right.

Jerry: My son Pete was going to school one day and I took him up on top of that roof. We were pouring the last part of it. But anyway I was going out of the door there heading to California and Ed Lynch pulled up in front in a car and jumped out and I said I have to hustle I have to get down to National Airport at that time - Reagan today. I had to catch a plane to California and he said well you've got one last chance of getting that Magarity farm. He said the Broyhills are going to buy it. And I said what's the price and he said \$3,500 an acre. I said oh my God well

Ed I have to run and catch a plane but how about calling Charlie Smith and B. Smith and he and I had met while standing in line in a bank Citizens Bank at one time now it's Sun Trust and we became friends thereafter.

His (Smith's) family had grown up in Alexandria and he had been in the service and I said well call Charlie and tell Charlie let's do a deal. So he made a deal and B. Smith signed everything. We're still partners, we're still partners in this stuff here but we bought the Magarity farm and we ended up – I think Ed brought us the Ulfelder family.

But Tysons One was just being planned about starting a shopping center and we bought this here and then joined with the Ulfelders and I went to Mexico to shake hands with grandmother Ulfelder. That is now what is West Park – we had bought some land and she had a big piece of land she was going to give to her kids. I suggested that one of this countries Certified Public Accountants (CPA's) and auditors and suggested to grandmother Ulfelder that we have a put and call so we could establish the price because it would keep going up for taxes for her and cost for us. She said I never heard of doing a put and call on real estate. I said they can do it on Wall Street why can't we do it in real estate. So they ended up agreeing that we could do it on real estate. So we did have a put and call with grandma Ulfelder which she could put what she wanted and which she did later in 1961 we formed West Gate I believe.

And West Park came later like late 1960's early 1970's – when she wanted to - she was ten years older and she wanted get on with her things, gifts, for the family so that's what we did and that's why we ended up here. And we called it West Gate because we thought it would end up being a west gate to D.C., because you probably know the about Burke airport story. General Eisenhower appointed General Quesada to go get the airport done - our new National Airport put at Burke you may not know this story. And General Quesada who had handled a humpa(?) operation in my war brought supplies over the Himalayas or rather the mountains there on the back side of Russia so you could fight the Germans and I had nothing to do with that but he was a General at that time. And he decided

that the airport shouldn't and he advised Dwight Eisenhower that the airport should not go in Burke it should go in a little town what is it called?

Ginny: Dulles, Chantilly.

Jerry: Chantilly. So we said oh my golly we've made a mistake we bought the land for Atlantic Research over there and they were settled there; we had built a building. A little aside there – when Tom Nicholson came to work on that building I asked him to go out and put the in footings, footers or footings – I call them footers but to get them in the ground there and he ah came back in a couple days and I said how's everything going Tom and he said well believe it or not we're just under five or six inches of top soil we came into the darkest looking stuff you've ever seen and we don't think we can pour footings into that stuff. Well we finally found out what it was – the Lynch family took all the unused food and stuff from the Pentagon and fed their hogs there - it was hog manure. So it slowed up our footings for a while but we finally had to go another three feet down or something to get under the...

Ginny: I thought maybe you were going to tell me it was marine clay there's lots of that.

Jerry: No it wasn't marine clay it was a new one, it was dark as it could be. But anyway, where am I on what I was saying to you?

Ginny: Well we were starting West Group.

Jerry: We Started West Group and we got a couple; we had done some secret work with some people over in Maryland who wanted to move over here. With the highway coming in out to Chantilly we figured it would go through here and it would be the West Gate of Washington.

Ginny: Okay, what was the highway? Was it Rt. 50?

Jerry: Well it would be the Dulles Airport road but it ended here.

Ginny: Oh, I see okay.

Jerry: The people in McLean fought the extension down to RT. 66 that was being planned I believe. They killed it – so it ended here the connector it ended right here at Rt. 123.

Ginny: Okay,

Jerry: The head of Department of Transportation (DOT) came to me years later came to us and asked us if we would – they were having a public hearing on a hotel in Roslyn and there was something like 59 people signed up to speak against the connector road down to Rt. 66. I mean the connector that would go to Dulles it would end here. You can imagine what the traffic would be in McLean today if that wasn't – it's already bumper to bumper.

Ginny: Yes.

Jerry: But anyway we pushed ahead and they had 59 people showing up to talk against it and one in favor of it. I think at that time Bill Coleman was in charge of or at least working for the federal government to get the extension road done to Rt. 66. So we churned in and had a lot of people show up, more people showed up in favor than against it so it got passed and built and thanks heaven it did in my opinion. It will affect everybody particularly the people in McLean which at that time they were against them, which I can understand because it's in some of their backyards. With the future coming – this was in what the nineteen sixties. So anyway that's a different story.

Ginny: You are our hero but who are some of your heroes?

Jerry: My heroes?

Ginny: Yeah.

Jerry: I don't know if I ever looked on heroes but I think one would be Harry Truman – wasn't he the one that made the decision to let the Enola Gay drop the bomb on Japan.

Ginny: Yep.

Jerry: Recently people were opposing the Enola Gay going back in the Smithsonian.

Ginny: Right.

Jerry: If they were sitting on the side of a hill in Guam like some of us were getting ready to go up and engage Japan where in my opinion we would have lost we would have lost hundreds of thousands of invaders in Japan and the Japanese would have lost millions.

I told you this day I was sitting on the side of a hill in Guam when my buddy ran up saying “we dropped the bomb, we dropped the bomb, the war will probably be over, probably be over” or we’ll be able to invade Japan without getting most of us killed. We all cheered. Well it’s a little different today but when we invaded Guam, the Marines, we went in behind the Marines. And I always said picked up the Marines thank heavens they went in ahead of us. But we did approach a – I was with a Marine group and going in Guam when we approached a big cliff side north of Lapa Harbor. I can’t know where that is now but there were women, Japanese women and children jumping off of that cliff. And so you can imagine what would have happened if we had gone up and dropped a few more bombs or Japan and invaded Japan. In my opinion the Japanese would have lost millions and millions of people because they were told by their emperor there to go out and kill those people or get killed doing it.

Ginny: So if you were to approach young people today what are the best things about moving to this area to Providence?

Jerry: Well since we talked last I guess there’s been some – there’s an article in the paper today about the Federal Government cutting down its funding in this whole area.

Ginny: For contractors you mean.

Jerry: For contractors that have supplied a lot of the companies in the Tysons area here are service companies meaning accountants, Lawyers, advisors people like that; advising the other companies that are created by federal funds. If those

federal funds start disappearing the article in the paper was about some other small town outside of here I don't know what it is but they claim there is a big factor there. I mean a government agency is going to lose I believe twelve hundred of the citizens of that little town when it shuts down. The government was proposing it and our elected officials here are opposing it. It's in today's Post.

Ginny: In Norfolk you mean?

Jerry: No it's not that, it's not Norfolk it's a small town I forget - it's in the Post this morning.

Ginny: Okay.

Jerry: That's happened since we talked last I think.

Ginny: Yeah.

Jerry: That could change this whole area and the roads in this area. Other than that I have always maintained that the Federal Government keeps getting bigger and bigger and where is it – it's here in Virginia and Maryland and D.C.

Ginny: When I moved here in 1962 there were only 150,000 people in Fairfax County and there was no Springfield Mall; there was no Landmark. Landmark may have been being built in 1962.

Jerry: Yep, it would have been – yes.

Ginny: Yeah.

Jerry: For sure.

Ginny: Quite a place.

Jerry: We did a lot of work in Springfield to the North West corner with the Lynch family.

Ginny: Right.

Jerry: We constructed those buildings a hotel and some of those office buildings. But I think if we are going to have to compete against China and India now and the government will still be here and may very well keep growing – I don't know.

Ginny: Yes.

Jerry: When you look at the latest financials of the Federal Government we have to change something I think.

Ginny: So how many philanthropies or boards or nonprofits do you serve on now?

Jerry: Well I've been getting off a lot of them.

Ginny: Have you?

Jerry: Yes.

Ginny: Over the years what were some of the things that interested you?

Jerry: Well it was park stuff. I spent a lot of time as partner with Mrs. Shouse at Wolf Trap.

Ginny: Right, you did tell me that story.

Jerry: That doesn't get published too much; she was a fine lady and that wouldn't be there if it hadn't been for her.

Ginny: And you.

Jerry: Well mainly her – well definitely her. But that's where I met C.R. Smith who was Secretary of Commerce under Lyndon B. Johnson (L.B.J.) and he took over the foundation there and I was the head of his finance. As a result of that we started a company called World Resources and my son Pete runs that – out of this building here by the way. Last I heard they are in 40 countries and the staff speaks 29 languages. I have a hard time with one.

Ginny: Peter was 15 when I met him.

Jerry: Wolf Trap was a good thing to push along and I got to know the Park Service and George Hartzog and Jack Fish were on the other side of the table and Mrs. Shouse did not want to deal with the Park. She said you do that – deal with those people. So I did that; of course we were on the other side of the table. We battled some but we all became very good friends and Jack Fish, finally I got to know Jack.

Linda: I knew Jack as well.

Jerry: He's now passed away. He fell off a horse and he decided to get the Park Service and was riding a horse over on the Mall I suppose. He then came to work for us work with us for about 10 years.

Ginny: Oh

Linda: He had 12 children.

Jerry: Yeah.

Linda: And he raised a 13th.

Jerry: Wife still looks like a high schooler – you can't believe it.

Ginny: Really.

Jerry: Yes, he was a fine family and they were good friends then Hartzog became good friends – George. When we formed the Board of Resources we thought we needed a good environmental thinking person and asked George. He had retired from the Park Service and asked if he would like to join that Board so he was there for a number of years. They live right down the street here.

Ginny: So you moved to your house in Mt. Vernon before you started West Group. You think had you not done that you would have ended up out here in Providence somewhere?

Jerry: I would have thought so yeah. We had a small home that we built. I built with these hands and it cost \$29,000; in Springdale just west of the intersection at Springfield behind that church there - I forget

Ginny: On old Keen Mill Road?

Jerry: Yeah as heads west its right there on the left side. It was a subdivision back in the woods at that time.

Ginny: Right alongside Backlick Road?

Jerry: Yeah, back in there and we built a home there and it's still there. I built it out of beveled cinder block it looks like siding but its cinder block. That's the one I offered to finance through the County to save Burke Lake you know. You know that story?

Ginny: No

Jerry: I'll tell you that then it's a little self-serving but I came home from – General Quesada and Eisenhower had said that the airport would be at Chantilly and not at Burke. The Federal Government and the county had worked together to get that land lined up for the airport at Burke. I thought you knew this story its self-serving to some extent but I'm proud of it and I can show you why I'm proud of it. But I came home from work one day and my wife said, we were living in Springfield – we had just moved there in that little house we had built on an acre of land with a nice little stream in the back where we use to catch crawfish. She said read the article in the paper it says as you know the airport is going up to Chantilly and the Federal Government has agreed to give the area that was going to be the airport at Burke to the county for a park. The State is putting their share in but the county's share, to my recollection is either 35,000 or 36,000 dollars but they don't have the money. They won't be able to save the land for a park. On the way to the office I decided that I might call – who was our county manager at that time, the building in Fairfax is named after him.

Ginny: Oh I know that.

Jerry: I forget.

Linda: Herrity.

Ginny: No, no the county manager.

Jerry: Before

Linda: The Massey building?

Jerry: Massey.

Ginny: Carlton Massey.

Jerry: Carlton Massey.

Ginny: Right.

Jerry: I'll have to remember that. Well I picked the phone up when I got to the office. The Board use to meet on Wednesday's I believe at that time if I remember correctly, but they meet on Monday's now.

Ginny: Right.

Jerry: I called Carlton; it was a small county at that time you knew everybody by first name. I said Carlton I read in the paper about that you really can't get 35,000 or 36,000 dollars? The budget's a little different today.

Ginny: Yes.

Jerry: He said no we don't have it. I said look I'll scrape it up for you I can finance the house I just build probably for 29,000 or 30,000 dollars and I can round up the rest for you. He said well Jerry we couldn't do that we've never done anything like that. And I said well I'm just trying to be helpful to the county and save a park. And now today it's the largest park in the system I'm pretty sure. But he says well we've never done anything like that and I don't think we can do that. So I said well so be it. Well on the following Wednesday, this was a Monday I think when I called him and came to work on Saturday and Sundays too but he – ah my wife called me and she "this has to stop, this has to stop". I said what has to stop? She says there are reporters pounding on the door and they are down talking to Peter who is down by the creek. There's people all over the property and I said what's going on? She says they accepted your offer.

Ginny: Oh, claps her hands and chuckles.

Linda: I read about you in the book called Braddock Gold it's put out by Sharon Bulova our current chair of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors when she was Braddock Chair...

Ginny: Supervisor.

Linda: Supervisor and she did a book called Braddock Gold.

Jerry: Is that right?

Linda: And you are in there as the man who mortgaged his house to help them.

Jerry: Well I agreed to mortgage the house.

Ginny: That's pretty neat.

Linda: And this is a lifetime pass from Burke Park.

Jerry: Well I've never used it.

Ginny: Really!

Jerry: And I'm gonna go down and try it. They say on weekends you have to pay \$8.00 to get in there now.

Ginny: That's pretty nice.

Jerry: Well I've never used it. Here's one I'd like to show you – and we won't get on this much but you two are ladies and there's a lady who is the Governor of Arizona is it that the Federal Government is now suing because she insisted that her police have a right to ask for I. D's.

Ginny: Right.

Jerry: And the Federal Government is now suing her.

Ginny: Right.

Jerry: Here's a card I found in an old file that was issued to me on September 1, 1948 and the bottom says it's from the Selective Service System – the bottom

says “the law requires you to have this card in your possession at all times for identification”.

Ginny: Hum.

Jerry: Now they are suing her and saying you can’t do that. This is the Federal Government doing this. I had to have this and anyone who was connected with the Selective Service had to carry this. Now they are after her, the people who did the same thing 60 years ago.

Ginny: Yep.

Jerry: But anyway Carlton Massey then called me and thanked me but said that they decided to issue some bonds which I’m not sure he said this but the indication was somehow was that they had never done anything like that up until that time. And they would handle it and if they needed help they would let me know. So we didn’t have to finance our home.

Ginny: That’s good. How did the press get a hold of it though? They must have talked about it in their board

Jerry: Oh they were sitting in the board member, no at the board meeting.

Ginny: Okay, okay.

Jerry: They decided that they would go ahead and – so be it.

Ginny: Yeah.

Jerry: But that’s now – I’m very proud of it. I think it’s – I’ve read that it’s the biggest park in the system – in Fairfax – that is the system.

Ginny: That’s wonderful.

Jerry: What are we on now?

Ginny: Oh, what do you feel is probably the biggest contribution that your group has made to this area; and in shaping the way this area has turned out?

Jerry: Well, we've kept it greener than most places.

Ginny: Okay, will you tell us a little bit about the greenhouse you built?

Jerry: The one in town here?

Ginny: Yeah.

Jerry: Well Mark Loam handled it for our company here; but its right in downtown McLean and was awarded the best home by the National Home Builders Association in the Country – Country wide we were just awarded that a couple weeks ago. But it was all done – a young man Mark Turner who had done some ones similar to it up on Capitol Hill not quite like it, not as sophisticated. His family's our neighbor in Jackson Hole Wyoming – about four miles away but that's a neighbor. He came to and Mark Loam's family is from Wyoming. And I'll tell a story – I shouldn't go on the recorder on this but that family – his mother told me when I asked when she was dying I said her Julie how much land – your family as homesteaders and Paul's her husband Mark's father and were homesteaders in Wyoming and she thought a minute and she said Jerry it was just a little over a million 90 thousand acres.

Ginny: Oh my.

Jerry: If you get the zeros out and figure D.C. is 10 by 10.

Ginny: Yep.

Jerry: Ten square miles times 640 acres and it's a fraction of a million 90 and they own that area; but it's a different world than here. What was I on for you?

Linda: He receives a lot of awards.

Ginny: Oh right, right. And tell us about some of the awards you've received as a result of your stewardship of this area in Providence.

Jerry: Honestly I don't keep track I don't even – the Company got one last night at this NAIOP meeting.

Ginny: Okay.

Jerry: Industrial Park which was a big thing but I've been associated with a lot of National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Conservation Fund over the years I've been on a lot of park stuff; Wolf Trap was one of them and Burke Lake was one for the county really. And we've given quite a bit of land to Jackson's Hole for the Parks.

Ginny: Right.

Jerry: And I've raised the money for that new visitor's center that's up and the last Secretary of the Interior said it's the nicest one in the country now. They're proud of it.

Ginny: The Grand Teton Park.

Jerry: Grand Teton yeah; it took us this is the twelfth year; twelve years ago the local superintendent asked me if I'd get together with a couple of guys and form a foundation to raise money to build a new visitor center. The visitor center at that time – the Park had about three million visitors a year - and it was about 10 times as big as this room. It was not as big as – it wasn't 3,000 or 4,000 feet not even that it might have been 1,200 feet or something. And no glass windows looking at the mountain there was only one glass piece in the front door that looked at the parking lot so in our new visitor center we have a 37 foot glass windows looking out the whole side of the building and we have a lot of high tech stuff with floors that have rivers flowing through it.

Ginny: Wow.

Jerry: But my experience with the Park Service here – B.J. Gerber – do you know B.J.

Ginny: No.

Jerry: John's son works for us here but that's the Washington family - George Washington family. Her father was our Ambassador to China and she was born in

China and B.J. was and they live here and her husband George did a lot of engineering for Georgetown.

Ginny: Oh.

Jerry: But she did a lot with Mount Vernon because of the Washington family. John's grandfather and I tell this because you would get a kick out of it – his grandfather or great grandfather I can't remember which moved – he was part of the Washington, the George Washington family here and he moved to the territory of Wyoming and did Buffalo Bill Cody's apartment and he did all the designing for the town of Cody. If you've ever been to Cody it's got some nice lakes and ponds and things and he did all that stuff. He did that in the territory and passed some laws and stuff in the territory and then they applied in 1891 to get into our union and we turned them down because of the laws he had passed giving women the vote.

Ginny: In Wyoming the women had

Jerry: Well Wyoming was the first one and they had the first lady Governor too. So five years later 1896 we allowed them to come into our union I guess we called it. But we gave women the vote then 26 years later in 1921; 25 years later in 1921. Anyway we had done something a little weird we were going to put an underground visitor's center at the Washington Monument we spent about a year and a half or two years working on it. The Park had meetings right here in my conference room. I'd say we had five or six meetings with the top people.

Ginny: The National Park Service?

Jerry: Not the National Park the Washington Park system. And they got a new superintendent over there and maybe a new Secretary of the Interior I can't remember, but they then said that they didn't know anything about what we were planning for the underground at the Washington Monument.

They had been here for meetings six or seven, they had gone to six or eight meetings right at park headquarters just off 14th street down there near the park.

Ginny: Yeah.

Jerry: He said “no he didn’t know a thing about it.” He was just not telling the truth.

Ginny: hump.

Jerry: So when I got involved in the moose thing in the Grand Teton I said I’m not going to raise any money or try to raise any money from friends or anybody until we know the the Park is approved what we are proposing. It took five years and they got that done. And then we started to raise the funds and we had a lady to join us who has done a wonderful job, we got two ladies who raised the funds for us. But I think the total now is about 28 million that we raised.

Ginny: Wow.

Jerry: And then at last the secretary of the Interior that was from Idaho a couple of years ago...

Ginny: Jim Watt?

Jerry: Oh, no, no, no, recently.

Ginny: Oh recently.

Jerry: A couple years ago he’s now out but he toured the visitor’s center and I wasn’t there but our lady president toured him and he said this is a wonderful place can we go see the auditorium now? She looked at him and said Mr. Halpin planned an auditorium, the local people wanted an auditorium we could have used it off season to raise money for the park to pay for the place I mean carry it. And he said you tell Mr. Halpin he can have his auditorium. So it’s just about being finished now.

Ginny: That’s great.

Jerry: But at that time we had priced it at somewhere like a million and a half and the bid we had a year ago was and I believe the people we have running it have gotten it down to two six or something like that. It was up over three million.

Ginny: Um.

Jerry: But anyway it is going in.

Ginny: What is the award you are going to receive on Tuesday the 30th?

Jerry: I didn't know a thing about it but what it is, is the Hall of Fame for Washington.

Ginny: The Washington Business Hall of Fame.

Jerry: The Washington Business Hall of Fame. They award I don't know three to five people every year I think. People like Mel Pierce and "Til" Hazel and some people from here have had it awarded to them.

Ginny: Okay. Is there anything else you can think of?

Jerry: I could get Peg (secretary) to give you a resume; it will tell you all these other things that you are asking.

Ginny: That would be great.

Jerry: I can get that for you.

Ginny: That will be great. We can fill in some stuff if there are blanks. Well thank you Jerry we appreciate the time or the second time. With three recorders hopefully we've got something.